

PARK COMMITTEE

Thursday, July 10, 2014

4 - 5:30 p.m.

Room 319 City Hall

Meeting Minutes

Committee members present: Co-Chairs Tom Fisher and David Wilson. Members: Lester Bagley, Dan Collison, Bruce Chamberlain, David Fields, Jacob Frey, Brent Hanson, Penny Hunt, Barbara Johnson, Eric Laska, David Miller, Jim Norkosky, Mike Ryan

Committee members excused: Hussein Ahmed, Michele Kelm-Helgen, Aron Lipkin, Peggy Lucas, Peter McLaughlin, Tom Nordyke, Brian Pietsch, R.T. Rybak, Matt Tucker, Trent Tucker

Guests: Varun Kharbanda, John Crosby, Carletta Sweet, Edna Brazaitis, Dale White, Jenn Hathaway, Dan Hulskotter, Arlene Fried, Lynn Regnier, Claudia Kittock, Steve Cramer, Jennifer Downham, Liz Wielinski

Staff/consultants present: Kjersti Monson, Ann Calvert, Beth Elliott, Brian Schaffer, Marsha Wagner

1. Welcome. Chair David Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:02.

2. Committee Business

- a. Approval of Minutes of 6/12/14 Meeting** – It was MOVED and SECONDED that the minutes be approved. Motion CARRIED.

3. Timeline Update

Bruce Chamberlain reported that there continues to be dialogue among the City and Park Board staff. Next step is to design the RFP for fees and scope, not design process; the design process will be done with full community collaboration. They are hoping to have a draft completed by the end of July which will be submitted to the Park Committee for review before the August 14 meeting. City partners and others will also review the RFP, which they plan to send out in September.

Subsequent discussion clarified the following points:

- The RFP will articulate that the park will be constructed in phases. The design should be for the Ultimate Park, with elements pulled out to be completed by Opening Day.
- Construction documents should be included for an Opening Day Park, but not for the Ultimate Park.
- The RFP will identify two different budgets: one for the Opening Day Park, and one for the Ultimate Park.
- The RFP will contain guidelines, including a history of the project. The Park Committee's work on Vision and Principles will be attached.
- The question of funding has not yet been answered. The design team will build the vision first, then the fundraising effort will begin. Opening Day Park will need private fundraising.
- The RFP will be advertised and distributed nationally and internationally.

4. Discussion of Vision and Principles

Brian Schaffer introduced a draft document, DT Park: Vision, Principles, Guidelines [Appendix A] that included a Vision Statement that incorporated descriptions of the Park as an event space (a

downtown gathering place) and everyday space (serving the needs of area residents, workers, guests and visitors). He led us through a presentation, East Downtown Park: Vision & Principles [Appendix B] that referenced the Vision, Principles & Program Value Map from the December 2013 meeting (as revised on May 8; [Appendix C]). Consistent themes from previous work done by this Committee include that the Park be inspiring, a world class destination with everyday appeal, flexible/multipurpose function, year-round, and actively programmed.

Four focal points for Vision & Principles have been identified:

- Destination: creating a premier urban destination that draws users from around the community and around the world
- User Functions: establishing compelling reasons to make this urban space a vital part of daily life, recurring visits, public celebrations and large events
- Connectivity: complementing and connecting to the full system of downtown public spaces as one of the key downtown event venues; and attracting people to the park from the river, adjacent neighborhoods and the downtown core; and minimizing real and perceived impact of vehicular traffic on Park and Portland Avenues through the blocks of the park
- Resiliency: integrating an ecological and resilient ethos into the design; acknowledging the history of the site and surrounding area

The general reaction was that this was a great first draft. The thoughtful discussion that ensued brought out several points that should be considered for inclusion in the Principles and Design Guidelines that will be distributed with the RFP:

- Highlight that the park should have flexible, durable, temporary structures, and bring them together with permanent structures
- Address the transit area and stadium plaza, with the possibility for a new transit station that would include restrooms, etc.
- Emphasize fun winter activities
- The park should be lush and green, providing residents relief from concrete
- Invite art into the design process, to be embedded or incorporated in materials, but not “plop” art
- Ground surface has to be durable, supporting large volumes of people, and should be integrated with green space
- Emphasize relaxation and calming aspects
- The park should be a playful, family-friendly play space
- Connections to the Armory and Chicago Avenue are important
- Prioritize pedestrian traffic over cars
- Make the park accessible and permeable from all directions; don’t fence off spaces
- Leave temporary or permanent closure of Park and Portland Avenues on the table

Regarding creation of temporary structures, Chair Fisher informed Committee members that the Industrial Fabrics Association International (IFAI), which created the fabric panels used in the China Olympics, is headquartered in Roseville, Minnesota. He offered to make a connection between the IFAI and the design team so they can take advantage of their expertise in designing innovative and creative temporary structures.

Referencing the bullet point “Acknowledge the history of the site and surrounding area” (page 10, Appendix B), Chair Wilson suggested that it read “consider (not integrate) historical interpretation of the site and area.”

In the everyday space portion of the Vision statement, Jim Norkosky suggested that the phrase “long-lasting memorable space” be moved to the Vision statement itself. This led to a discussion about the

Vision statement with two accompanying paragraphs being too long. Bruce Chamberlain said a vision statement should be a single statement, and everyone should be able to state it. Matt Tucker, who was unable to attend the meeting, sent an email prior to the meeting strongly suggesting a simple, strong paragraph that captures the park vision. He provided the following text, which was read into the record:

Recognizing the visionary, late-19th century planning and design legacy that resulted in the establishment of one of the world's premiere urban park networks, the park seeks to build upon this legacy by establishing a 21st-century urban park that will be a future model for other cities throughout the globe. This park will reflect and anticipate the demands of a contemporary urban park, which include flexible programming for a few to events for thousands, exhibit urban ecological resilience in its growth and energy and nutrient neutrality in its upkeep, promote active and healthy living for children of all ages, engage traditional and emerging investment models to sustain park physical and programmatic resources, (insert items as appropriate).

At the conclusion of this discussion, Mr. Schaffer said that all members of the Park Committee will be invited to submit additional feedback. An email with these discussion documents attached will be sent out, with July 17 as the deadline for comments to be emailed to Marsha Wagner for compilation.

5. Closing Business.

- a. **Next Meeting.** Scheduled for Thursday, August 14, Room 319 City Hall.
- b. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.